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Monday, 11 Oct 2010



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A Word From Tim Downs - September



Dear Friends,

"Engaged with SEC"

My two months of sabbatical is quickly fading as I begin to visit you in your churches, work with search committees, engage the fall meeting and program calendar of the Conference and Associations. However I am deeply grateful for the sabbatical that was truly a time of rest and restoration. The reading and reflection with which I was engaged focused on some rummaging around in John Calvin, reading concerning the emergent church, and thinking about the future shape of our beloved United Church of Christ, and the role of a conference in equipping the local church for a dynamic, if somewhat uncertain future.



There is no doubt in my mind that mainline denominationalism is going through a time of tremendous change. We will not look like we now do in twenty-five years. Many of our churches will be either changed or gone, and we have already seen the signs of this ground swell. Phyllis Tickle compares this time to the Reformation in terms of its impact on the church, and suggests that the church goes through a "rummage sale" every five hundred years, and we are in the middle of such a time. The last "rummage sale" was the Reformation to which we trace our historical roots in the United Church of Christ. The church that is taking shape she calls "the emergent church". The question to us

in the Southeast Conference is "how do we rise to the challenge of this emergent season, and equip our congregations for living in these times fully and faithfully, and I would add, without fear?"

I believe that this conference is uniquely gifted to be a vital and dynamic partner in shaping the way in which the UCC is living into its future. Our staff in already engaged in conversations about how to attract and shape the kind of leadership that will be required for "the living of these days". It is clear to me that we will continue to build partnerships not only across the United States, but globally as well in this work. It is further clear that we will strengthen our online capacities to communicate, to teach, and to meet. We have set a goal of building our conference at a rate of 10% a year in growth in numbers of congregations, a goal that is ambitious, but I believe attainable.

I want to add my thanks to a gifted staff and leadership which was in place during my sabbatical time, and who took great measures to protect me from interruptions. And for the curious, who want to know how many miles I bicycled over the course of the summer, it was, 500 miles... a good beginning.

Thanks to each of you lay leaders and pastors for your hard work to build our ministries.

Peace,

UCC News

UCC Newsroom

Headlines from the United Church of Christ

[All-staff day helps UCC national offices staff find new ways to collaborate](#)

More than 100 national staff members from Cleveland and other U.S. locations gathered today at the UCC's national headquarters for worship, breakout discussions and report-backs relating to the tasks and transitions involved in their work.



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EVENTS CALENDAR

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

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